

I am especially dismayed that the resolution came within one vote of being rejected by the House. Just last summer, it passed by a landslide. The obvious explanation for this dramatic change is the attacks of September 11th. Ironically, the previous bill extending section 245(i) was scheduled to be voted on for enactment on the day of the attacks. Six months later, it struggled to make it out of the House.

Some would argue that it is these attacks, committed by people from countries other than our own that have changed our viewpoints on immigrants. This is an overly simplistic explanation. While it is certainly expected that these attacks would make us more acutely aware of the enemies we face, we cannot blame the terrorists that carried out these horrific attacks for the anti-immigrant sentiment that was articulated in this chamber during the debate on this resolution. We are the ones responsible for this attitude.

We can never undo what was done against us and we can never fully understand the evil that lurked in the hearts of these men. But we can control what impact they have upon our lives. We should not allow fear to become the guiding principle, but should stand strong for the principles our country are founded on. Punishing our hard working, committed, and American, in every sense of the word, immigrant community is not the answer.

We are headed in the right direction with H. Res. 365, but it is only a step. There is much more work to be done.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF VERA  
PÉREZ (1933–2002)

**HON. HILDA L. SOLIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 13, 2002*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Vera Pérez. Vera was born in 1933 in Los Angeles and raised by Pete Acosta, a single father. She and her sister, Natalia, spent much of their formative years in boarding schools and boarding houses, only really able to spend Sundays with their father.

As a young woman, Vera worked in a factory. In the 1970s she completed the CETA training program and began working at the Older Residents Medical Screening Program (ORMSP) as a receptionist. ORMSP is a non-profit healthcare company that provides free medical screening for senior citizens in the East side of Los Angeles. Through her 18 years at ORMSP, Vera advanced from receptionist to data specialist and eventually was running the program when she retired in 1995.

Vera and her husband, Felipe, had five children: Diana, Lisa, Yvette, Phillip and John; and four grandchildren. In addition, Vera had an active hand in raising her four nephews and nieces, including Antonio Villaraigosa, who went on to be the Speaker of the California State Assembly.

Vera Pérez died on March 5, 2002. She will be dearly missed by her loving family and friends.

PLANET MARS

**HON. JOHN COOKSEY**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 13, 2002*

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, We are better prepared to go to the planet Mars today than to the Moon in 1961. The reasons to go are compelling and the goal is within reach.

Like the Moon Race, exploring Mars will have benefits here on Earth, revitalizing our economy and society like no other challenge. America's wealth today testifies to space exploration's past return-on-investment in communications, computers, and advanced materials. Mars exploration will bring to all of us a positive and dynamic vision of the future—a goal to achieve, a dream to make real.

As the planet most like Earth, Mars should be the next focus of space exploration. We have sent many robots to explore Mars for us, but their abilities are limited. It's time to go there ourselves.

We have the means to explore and settle Mars in the near-term on only a fraction of NASA's current budget, but work is needed to refine key technologies like space suits and life support systems. The targeted investment of a modest 1% of NASA's annual budget can achieve these advances. Adequate funds would remain for NASA's other priorities today, while we prepare for the day in the very near future when Americans again walk on another world.

The time to plan our next giant leap is now. It's our future, let's make it happen.

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PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING, SALUTING AND COMMENDING FIREFIGHTER LEON SMITH, JR.—LADDER NUMBER 118

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 13, 2002*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, as a Tribute to Firefighter Leon Smith, Jr. of Ladder Number 118, a member of the Vulcan's Society and one of the fallen heroes of September 11th, I would like to insert the following proclamation into the RECORD:

Whereas, September 11, 2001 was a day of horror and tragedy that will forever live in the memory of Americans, and;

Whereas, more than 3,000 people from many occupations, nationalities, ethnic groups, religions and creeds were brutally murdered by terrorists, and;

Whereas, members of the New York City Fire Department, New York City Police Department, Port Authority and other Public Safety Personnel, through their valiant, courageous and heroic efforts saved the lives of thousands under unprecedented destructive circumstances, and;

Whereas, more than 300 New York City Firefighters lost their lives in the effort to save others, and;

Whereas, Congressman Major R. Owens and the people of the 11th Congressional District salute the bravery and dedication of all who gave their full measure of devotion, and;

Whereas, we deem it appropriate to highlight the courage and valor of individuals and groups in a variety of forms and ceremonies: Now therefore be it

*Resolved:* That on this 10th Day of March, Two Thousand and Two, Congressman Major R. Owens, and representatives of the people of the 11th Congressional District, pause to salute the sacrifices of these honored men, and offer their heartfelt condolences to families of these African American Firefighters who died at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

That the text of this resolution shall be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of the United States House of Representatives.

Given by my hand and seal this 10th day of March, Two Thousand and Two in the Year of our Lord.

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CONGRESSMAN RANDY FORBES  
COMMENDING THE GIRL SCOUTS  
OF THE U.S.A. ON THEIR 90TH  
ANNIVERSARY

**HON. J. RANDY FORBES**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 13, 2002*

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. on their 90th Anniversary. The Girl Scouts are a quintessential American institution that has exported its successful strategy to 140 countries, and a worldwide family of 8.5 million girls. The Girls Scouts represent the largest voluntary organization for girls in the world.

Juliette Gordon Low, who believed that all girls should have the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually, formed the Girl Scouts this week in 1912. Congress first chartered the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. on March 16, 1950. Since that time, the Girl Scouts have grown to over 3.8 million members throughout America.

The Girl Scouts have held true to their mission to help all girls grow strong and develop their full potential. The Girl Scout Promise compels each young Girl Scout to be their best by pledging: "On my honor, I will try; To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law."

Now more than ever, the young women of America needs the Girl Scout's positive message and leadership. The Girl Scouts provide an environment where girls are challenged and guided to become capable, self-reliant, ethical women who will make a difference.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I commend the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. on their 90th Anniversary and their invaluable contributions to the upbringing of America's young women. I congratulate the Girl Scouts and thank all those who have contributed their time, energy, and love in making this organization an American success story.

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PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING, SALUTING AND COMMENDING FIREFIGHTER KARL JOSEPH-ENGINE NO. 207

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 13, 2002*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, as a Tribute to Firefighter Karl Joseph of Engine Number 207, a member of the Vulcan's Society and one of